

Developing Media Relations

Help get the word out about your program by developing relationships with local media personalities.

The success of every healthy marriage initiative depends on getting the word out about the program. One strategy for building awareness is to develop relationships with local media personalities. A few recognizable faces or voices promoting you in the community can be an asset to your program. Remember, however, that a spokesperson's reputation and relationship history matters, so choose wisely. This Tip Sheet provides ideas on how to build relationships with media outlets in your area in an effort to get free or discounted print and broadcast media coverage for your initiative/program.

A little research will help you develop media relationships that can be mutually beneficial. For example, a local television personality who was recently married or engaged can become a perfect ambassador for your initiative. Invite him or her to serve as the master or mistress of ceremonies at your next community event.

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Also ask your staff and board members if they have any connections with media personalities and can help get your foot in the door.

Take time to educate media personalities about your program and how it benefits the community.

After you develop relationships, consider asking them to join your Board and serve on your public relations committee. In addition to their media connections, they also network with many community leaders and can identify natural partnerships.



Give them as much lead time as possible and offer to promote their presence on your flyers, website and other promotional materials. It's good PR for them to be seen in the community and good exposure for your program.

Ask radio personalities to host a “live show” from your community event or resource fair.

If they agree, they will usually mention your event on the air and on their website. Give them as much lead time as possible and offer to promote their presence on your flyers, website and other promotional materials. It's good PR for them to be seen in the community and good exposure for your program.

Media representatives are approached every day by organizations asking for free airtime. Communicate how promoting your program can be a win for them as well. How does your work support their mission and philosophy? What positive community exposure can you offer them? Look for the win-win angle in every opportunity.

Build relationships by highlighting your aligning missions.

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To learn more, refer to the “Getting Free/Low Cost Media Coverage for Your Program” Tip Sheet.

The National Healthy Marriage Center (NHMRC) would like to thank Robyn Cenizal for her contribution to this Tip Sheet. Ms. Cenizal is the Executive Administrator for the Jacksonville Network for Strengthening Families Initiative, a program she co-developed and implemented. The NHMRC would also like to acknowledge Ervin Lucero of the Resource Center for his contribution to this Tip Sheet. This is a product of the NHMRC, led by co-directors Mary Myrick, APR, and Jeanette Hercik, PhD, and project manager Patrick Patterson, MSW, MPH.